

Remarks

To further prosecution of the present application, Applicants have herein amended claims 24, 26 and 29. The amendments to claims 24, 26 and 29 do not add new subject matter and have antecedent basis. Claims 3, 5, 20, 24, 26 and 29-35 are currently pending with claims 24 and 26 in independent form.

Rejection of Claims 3, 5, 24 and 27-32 under 35 U.S.C. § 112

Claims 3, 5, 24 and 27-32 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, first paragraph, as failing to comply with the written description requirement. Specifically, the Examiner has indicated that the claims contain subject matter that was not described in the specification in such a way as to reasonably convey to one skilled in the relevant art that the inventors had possession of the claimed invention at the time the application was filed.

Claims 24 and 26 have been amended herein to include subject matter having antecedent basis in the specification. Claim 24 includes amendments directed to subject matter recited in the present application on page 11, lines 20-23 and page 13, lines 3-6. Claim 26 includes amendments directed to subject matter recited in the application on page 10, lines 5-7 and on page 11, lines 20-23.

Applicants respectfully submit that amended claims 24 and 26 meet the written description requirement under 35 U.S.C. § 112 and respectfully request withdrawal of the rejection of claims 24 and 26.

Claims 3, 5 and 29-32 depend from claim 24, and the rejection of such claims under 35 U.S.C. § 112 is respectfully requested. Claims 20 and 33-35 depend from claim 26, and the rejection of these claims under 35 U.S.C. § 112 is also respectfully requested.

Rejection of Claims 3, 5, 20, 24 and 26-35 Under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) or § 103(a)

Claims 3, 20, 24 and 26-35 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as anticipated by Kroesbergen (WO 96/23024). In addition, claims 3, 20, 24 and 26-35 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Gaa et al. (U.S. 4,810,576). Applicants respectfully traverse the rejections of claims 3, 5, 20, 24 and 26-35 as anticipated by Kroesbergen and as being unpatentable over Gaa et al. for the reasons provided below.

Claim 24 has been amended herein and is directed to a coating composition for an article comprising a superabsorbent water-soluble polyacrylate polymer precursor in aqueous solution, which, when applied to at least a portion of a surface of an article and the article is heated to about 280°, the polyacrylate polymer precursor cures by cross-linking to form a superabsorbent polyacrylate polymer coating having a swell capacity of up to about 400 times an initial dry weight of the polyacrylate polymer.

Applicants respectfully submit that Kroesbergen does not specifically teach a superabsorbent water-soluble polyacrylate polymer precursor in aqueous solution that, when applied to an article surface and the article is heated to about 280°, the polyacrylate polymer precursor cures by cross-linking to form a superabsorbent polymer coating having a swell capacity of up to about 400 times an initial dry weight of the polyacrylate polymer. Therefore, claim 24 is patentably distinguishable from Kroesbergen. Applicants, therefore, respectfully request withdrawal of the rejection of claim 24 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b).

Claims 3, 5 and 29-31 depend from claim 24 and are patentable for at least the same reason given above. Therefore, the rejection of such claims under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) should be similarly withdrawn.

In addition, with respect to claim 24, Applicants respectfully submit that Gaa et al. do not teach or suggest a superabsorbent polymer coating for an article having a swell capacity of up to about 400 times an initial dry weight of a polyacrylate polymer formed from a superabsorbent water-soluble polyacrylate precursor in aqueous solution that when applied to the article and the article is heated to about 280° cures by cross-linking. Thus, claim 24 is patentably distinguishable from Gaa and withdrawal of the rejection of claim 24 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) is respectfully requested.

Claims 3, 5 and 29-31 depend from claim 24 and are patentable for at least the same reason given above. Accordingly, the rejection of these claims under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) should be withdrawn.

Claim 26 has been amended herein and is directed to an aqueous coating composition comprising a superabsorbent water-soluble polyacrylate polymer precursor in aqueous solution, wherein the superabsorbent polyacrylate polymer precursor is one of an anionic

alkali salt and an alkali metal salt, a viscosity-modifying agent, and a binder, wherein when the aqueous coating composition is applied to at least a portion of a surface of an article and the article is heated, the composition dries and the polyacrylate polymer precursor cures by cross-linking to form a superabsorbent polyacrylate polymer coating having a swell capacity of up to about 400 times an initial dry weight of the polyacrylate polymer.

Applicants respectfully submit that Kroesbergen does not specifically teach the coating composition including an anionic alkali salt or alkali metal salt of a superabsorbent water-soluble polyacrylate polymer precursor in aqueous solution, a viscosity-modifying agent and a binder that when applied to an article and the article is heated, the composition dries and the polyacrylate polymer precursor cures by cross-linking to form a superabsorbent polyacrylate polymer coating having a swell capacity of up to about 400 times an initial dry weight of the polyacrylate polymer. Claim 26, therefore, is patentably distinguishable from Kroesbergen. Applicants respectfully request the rejection of claim 26 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) be withdrawn.

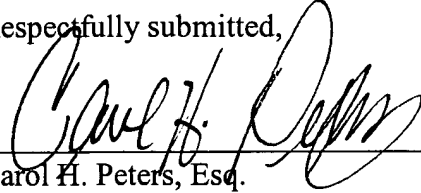
Claims 20 and 33-35 depend from claim 26 and are patentable for at least the same reason given above. Therefore, the rejection of such claims under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) should be withdrawn.

In addition, with respect to claim 26, Applicants respectfully request that Gaa et al. do not teach or suggest the coating composition of claim 26 and, in particular, to do not disclose the aqueous coating composition that, when applied to an article and the article is heated, the aqueous composition dries and the polyacrylate polymer precursor cures by cross-linking to form a superabsorbent polyacrylate polymer coating having a swell capacity of up to about 400 times the initial dry weight of the polyacrylate polymer. Claim 26 is patentably distinguishable from Gaa et al. Thus, Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the rejection of claim 26 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a).

Claims 20 and 33-35 depend from claim 26 and are patentable for at least the same reason given above. Accordingly, the rejection of such claims under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) should be withdrawn.

Based upon the foregoing amendments and discussion, the present application is believed to be in condition for allowance, and an action to this effect is respectfully requested. Should the Examiner have any questions concerning this response, he is invited to telephone the undersigned.

Respectfully submitted,



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